



## U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

# News Release

*Maui National Wildlife Refuge Complex*

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### **U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Initiates Comprehensive Conservation Plan for Two Maui Nui National Wildlife Refuges**

*Public invited to comment until November 20, 2009*

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is initiating development of a comprehensive conservation plan for Keālia Pond and Kakahai‘a National Wildlife Refuges that will guide their management for the next 15 years. Two public meetings are planned to explain the planning process and seek the public’s involvement in identifying issues to be addressed.

The two open houses/public workshops will provide opportunities for the public to learn more about the comprehensive conservation planning process and how they can be involved throughout the process. These initial meetings will solicit thoughts from the local communities and other interested entities regarding the issues that should be addressed in the management plan. The open houses are scheduled from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. as follows:

**Moloka‘i:**

Date: Wednesday, November 4, 2009  
Time: 6:30 pm - 8:00 pm  
Location: Mitchell Pauole Center-Conference Room  
90 Ainoa Street, Kaunakakai

**Maui:**

Date: Thursday, November 5, 2009  
Time: 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm  
Location: Kīhei Community Center-Main Hall  
303 East Lipoa Street, Kīhei

Keālia Pond and Kakahai‘a National Wildlife Refuges are part of the Maui National Wildlife Refuge Complex. Keālia Pond National Wildlife Refuge, located along the south central coast of Maui, was established in 1992 to provide habitat for two of Hawai‘i’s endangered waterbirds, specifically the ae‘o or Hawaiian stilt and ‘alae ke‘oke‘o or Hawaiian coot. Wetlands totaling over 500 acres make up the Keālia Pond NWR and are managed to create mudflat, open water and emergent marsh for endangered Hawaiian waterbirds, migratory waterfowl, and shorebirds. In addition to endangered waterbirds, Keālia Pond provides coastal beach strand habitat for native plant species, endangered Hawaiian monk seals, threatened honu or green turtles and endangered honu ‘ea or hawksbill turtles.

Keālia Pond NWR provides a strategic landfall for migratory birds coming from Alaska, Siberia, and Asia such as koloa mapu or Northern pintail, kōlea or Pacific golden-plover, and ‘akekeke or ruddy turnstone. Although these migratory populations are small by continental standards, they represent some of the largest concentrations of these species in Hawai‘i and the Pacific. A total of 110 species of birds has been documented on the refuge.

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Kakahai‘a National Wildlife Refuge is located on the southeastern coast of Moloka‘i. Habitats found on this refuge include open water, freshwater marsh, mudflat, grassland, and shrubland. An inland Hawaiian fishpond is also located on the refuge. The refuge provides important breeding, feeding, and resting areas for endangered waterbirds, a variety of migratory waterfowl, shorebirds, and other wetland birds. Some of the more common migrants are Northern pintail and Pacific golden plover. Kakahai‘a is closed to the general public. However, volunteers occasionally conduct wetland education programs.

The Service invites public comments on issues to be addressed in the comprehensive conservation plan. For more information, including the first planning update for this project, see the Service's website at: <http://www.fws.gov/pacific/planning>. To receive a paper copy of the planning update and comment form, or to submit comments, contact: Glynnis Nakai, Project Leader, Maui National Wildlife Refuge Complex, P.O. Box 1042, Kīhei, Hawai‘i 96753, phone: (808) 875-1582, fax: (808) 875-2945.

Comments can also be e-mailed to us using the following address: [FWIPlanningComments@fws.gov](mailto:FWIPlanningComments@fws.gov). Please include “Keālia Pond or Kakahai‘a” in the subject line. To have your comments considered during the public scoping phase of the plan’s development, submit your comments by November 20, 2009. Additional opportunities to provide comments will be available throughout the planning process.

The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with others to conserve, protect and enhance fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. We are both a leader and trusted partner in fish and wildlife conservation, known for our scientific excellence, stewardship of lands and natural resources, dedicated professionals, and commitment to public service. For more information on our work and the people who make it happen, visit [www.fws.gov](http://www.fws.gov).

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